# PHOTOSHOP® FiX

$10 US | $13.75 CDN

DECEMBER 2004

# BIG SURGE
POSITIVE ENERGIES

# RAISE THE BAR

**ESSENTIALS:**
NAIL DOWN YOUR VALUES

**TOOLS:**
USE YOUR ANIMAL MAGNETISM

**TECHNIQUES:**
MAKE SOME NOISE

**STUDIO:**
DAVID NAGEL GETS AN EDGE

**EXPERT TIPS:**
CONSERVE YOUR BRAINPOWER

# ARE YOU READY FOR A NEW SENSATION?

**With a photo of a model shot against a black background, Syndrome Studio (Hollywood, Calif.) weaved strands of light and energy around her. To do this, they first developed three base entities—an energy element, water splash images, and groups of airbrushed circles—then they used masking and blending modes to fuse them into dazzling energy streams.**

❶ Syndrome first created an energy element in a 3D software application, rendered the element with an alpha channel, and saved it as a TIFF. Opening the TIFF in Photoshop, they accessed the Channels palette and Command/Ctrl-clicked the imported alpha channel to select it. They copied the selection, went to their main image file of the model, and pasted the alpha channel selection to a new layer. Then Syndrome duplicated the element layer (Command/Ctrl-J), clicked the Lock transparent pixels icon near the top of the Layers palette, and filled the layer with yellow. (Only the element was filled since the transparent pixels were locked.) The yellow of the duplicate element covered the detail of the original element below it, so they set the layer blending mode to Color to blend yellow with the details.

❷ Next, Syndrome shot photos of splashing water against a black background and brought them into layers in the main image file. To only show the intricate details of the splashes, Syndrome set the layers to Lighten to make the backgrounds transparent.

❸ To complement the energy element, Syndrome created a new layer and painted with a soft airbrush for a small opaque sphere with a blurred edge, then duplicated the layer and scaled the sphere for variety using Free Transform (Command/Ctrl-T). They continued duplicating and manipulating sphere layers and used the move tool to overlap the shapes, which added varying levels of opacity and depth to the blurred edges. To consolidate all the spheres, they placed the layers in a layer set (Create a new set icon at the bottom of the Layers palette) and added a mask to the set. By selecting the mask thumbnail and painting with black, they concealed parts of spheres to blend them into a unified shape.

❹ For fine details, Syndrome drew a line with the pen tool on a new layer and chose Save Path from the Paths palette. After choosing a small yellow brush, they chose Stroke Path from the Paths palette menu, then chose Brush in the resulting dialog box to add yellow to the path. On the stroked path's layer, they added a mask, selected the gradient tool, and chose the Foreground to Transparent icon in the Options bar. Dragging the tool from each end of the line to the center, they made the line fade to transparency at the ends. For more depth, they duplicated the layer, placed it beneath the original, and applied a Gaussian Blur.

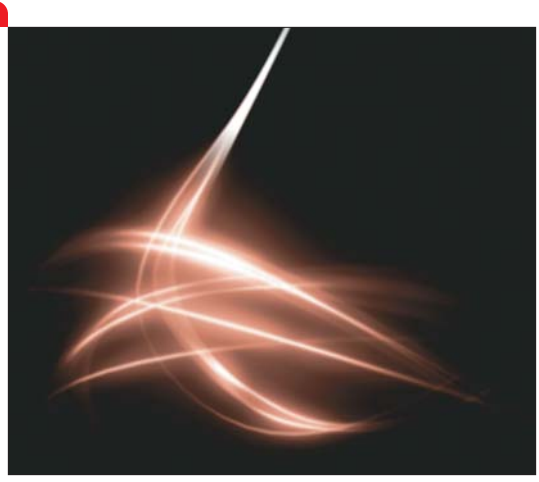
❺ After determining where they wanted energy streams to surround the model, they started duplicating layers of the energy element, the water splashes, and the sphere layer sets to form dominant shapes. To do this, they moved the layers' order as well as repositioned the entities on the individual layers and used Free Transform to distort them. They added masks to several of the layers and painted with black to continue contouring the shapes so they would flow around the model. Once layers were composited and masked to their liking, Syndrome dragged the layers that formed specific energy streams into several layer sets. To quickly apply a global Gaussian Blur to an energy stream, they duplicated the layer set and collapsed it to a single layer by pressing Command/Ctrl-E. From there, they applied an Overlay or Screen blending mode to the collapsed layer and duplicated it several times to build up texture and contrast.

❻ Syndrome repeated the line effect throughout the image, including a layer of circular lines positioned around the model's finger to simulate a water ripple. To add realism, they chose Filter > Liquify and clicked Backdrop under View Options to see all the layers of the main image. Setting the Brush Pressure low, they used the Warp tool to subtly contour the ripple lines.

**Syndrome Studio**
**818.623.0026**
**info@syndromestudio.com**
**www.syndromestudio.com**

**FOR USERS OF PHOTOSHOP 7 AND LATER. COMMANDS AND IMAGES SHOWN IN PHOTOSHOP 7.**

1



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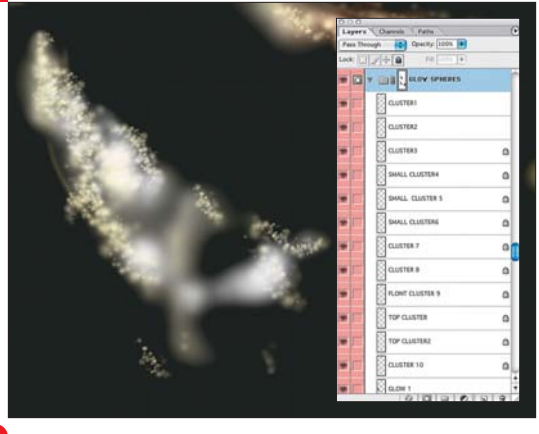
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Channels
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CLUSTER2
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GLOW 1

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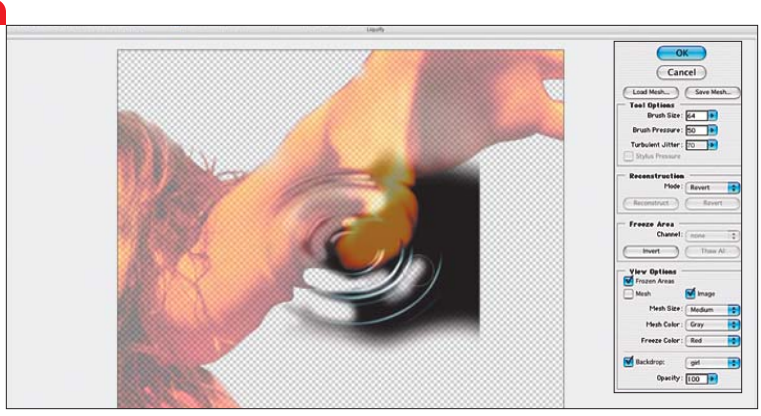
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Revert
Freeze Area
Channel: none
Invert
Thaw All
View Options
Frozen Areas
Mesh
Image
Mesh Size: Medium
Mesh Color: Gray
Freeze Color: Red
Backdrop: gel
Opacity: 100

# SET A TONE THAT WILL DRAW A CROWD

**Laurentiu Todie (Rego Park, N.Y.) was commissioned by OnRequest Images to photographically bring a hand-sketched concept of a bar scene to life. He created the environment with the help of some well-placed masks, then dimmed the lights and added ambiance with Curves.**

❶ For a base image, Todie shot a model leaning on a counter in front of shelves with bottles. In Photoshop, he decided to increase the counter's length by shooting it again without the model, importing it to a layer above the base image, and placing it just over the base image's counter. He pressed Command/Ctrl-T to access Free Transform and distorted the shape in proportion with the main counter. After adding a layer mask, he painted the overlapped area with a soft black brush until the counters blended together. The lighting varied between the counter shots, so Todie selected the new counter layer, opened Curves (Command/Ctrl-M), and darkened it by increasing the midpoint.

❷ The base image background didn't suit the intimate, hazy mood Todie was after, so he placed a new bar background photo on a layer above the base image. He brought a beer tap photo onto a layer, applied a 3-pixel Gaussian Blur to soften the edges between it and the new background, then merged the layer with the new background. Since the new background covered the base image, he made the model and counter visible by adding a mask to the new background layer and painted with black to hide areas of it. The elements contrasted unrealistically now with the new bar background. To fix this, he added a Curves adjustment layer to the base image and increased the shadow tones. Using the adjustment layer's mask, he painted black on parts of the sweater and bottle to conceal areas that didn't need the lighting change.

❸ Todie emphasized the bottle by first choosing New Path from the Paths palette and tracing the bottle with the pen tool. He chose Make Selection from the palette menu and set a 1-pixel Feather Radius and checked Anti-aliased. Back in the Layers palette, he created a Curves adjustment layer, which automatically masked the bottle selection, then increased the bottle's highlights.

❹ To further darken the overall atmosphere, Todie created a Curves adjustment layer, positioned it underneath the new bar background layer, then darkened by increasing the mid- and three-quarter tones. This improved the mood, but altered saturation in the process, so he preserved color by setting the layer's blending mode to Luminosity.

❺ Todie now wanted to suggest reflections from the bar's environment. He added a layer at the top of the palette and set a soft brush to 50% Opacity. Using purple and orange, he painted on the counter, hands, and sweater. To soften the effect, he set the blending mode to Overlay at 50% Opacity.

❻ To retouch the model's face, Todie filled a new layer with 50% Gray (Edit > Fill or Shift-F5). He set the blending mode to Overlay and with a low-opacity brush, he used the dodge tool on dark blemishes and the burn tool on light spots. (Press Option/Alt to temporarily alternate tools.) "Sometimes I also add a layer set to Soft Light, sample color near a blemish with the eyedropper, and paint with a low-opacity brush," he adds.

**Lucian Mihaesteanu, photographer**
**Laurentiu Todie**
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**www.retouching.com**
**www.onrequestimages.com**

**FOR USERS OF PHOTOSHOP 5 AND LATER. COMMANDS AND IMAGES SHOWN IN PHOTOSHOP CS.**

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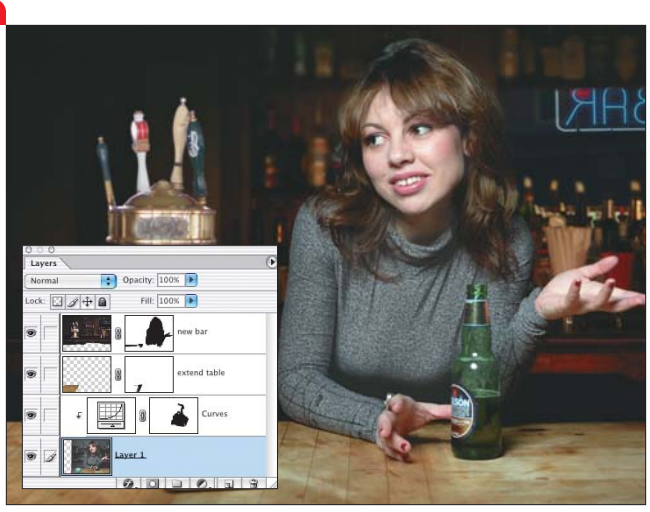
2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Fill: 100%
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Layer 1

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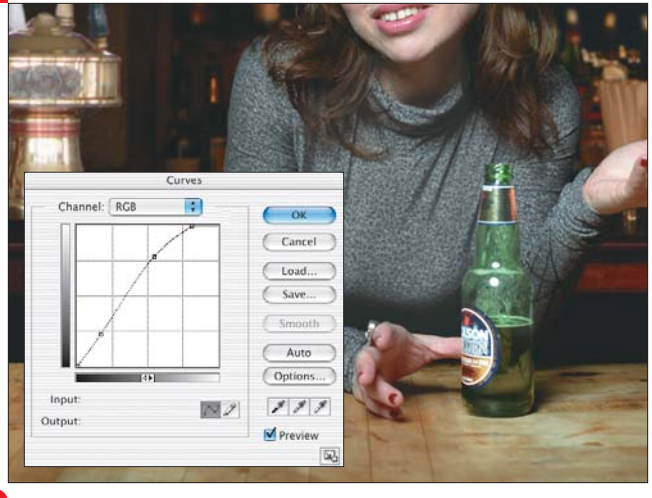
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Input:
Output:
Preview

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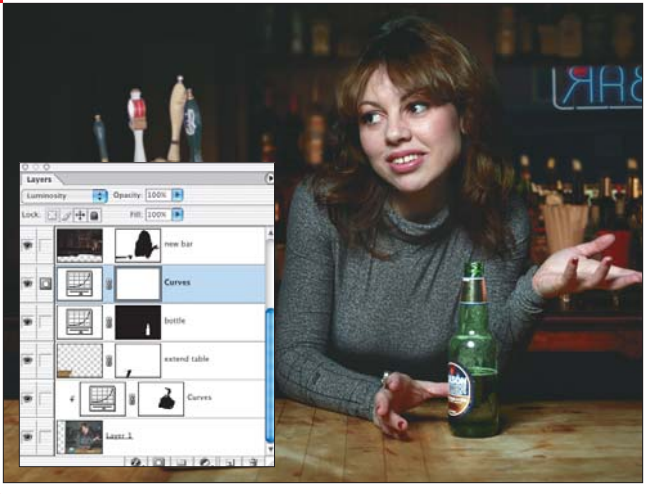
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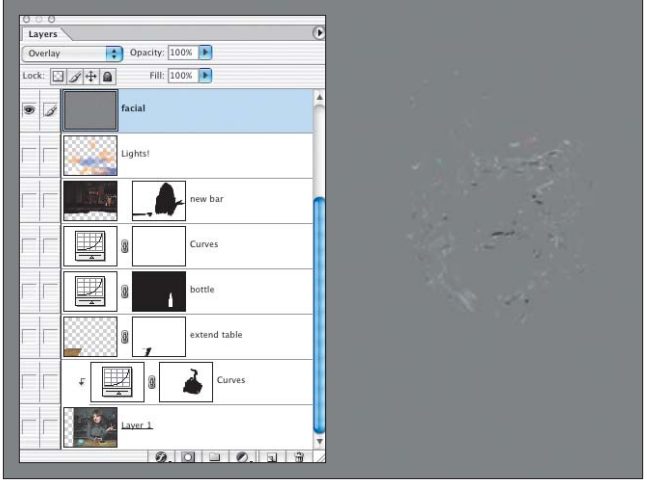
Curves
bottle
extend table
Curves
Layer 1

5

6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Overlay
Opacity: 100%
Lock:
Fill: 100%
facial
Lights!
new bar
Curves
bottle
extend table
Curves
Layer 1

BY SIMON TUCKETT

# FEEL GOOD ABOUT LOOKING BAD

**The Levels command is one of the best ways to put life back into a poorly exposed photo that has been shot through glass or haze. Discover some of the key features of the Levels dialog box while you recover this bad photo.**

DOWNLOAD "PANTINGDOG.JPG" FROM WWW.PHOTOSHOPFIX.COM, DECEMBER 2004 ISSUE.

Before you begin, select the eyedropper tool from the toolbox (I) and choose 3 x 3 Average from the Sample Size pull-down menu in the Options bar. This will ensure whenever you click with the eyedropper tool, you'll get the average value of a 9-pixel block.

❶ Open "PANTINGDOG.JPG," a bad shot taken through a car windshield on a cloudy day. Click the Create new fill or adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette, and choose Levels so you can toggle the visibility of the adjustment later. Look at the Levels dialog box; most of the work will take place in the Input Levels histogram. The histogram displays the 256 values of an image starting with black on the left through white on the right. It's like a sideways glance of your image, which can be very useful in determining how to optimize it. The height of each bar in the histogram indicates the quantity of pixels at that value in the image. An ideal picture is one where every value is represented in the histogram—that isn't the case here. The majority of the visible values reside in the midtone area of the histogram. No wonder the image looks flat!

❷ Underneath the Options button, you'll see three eyedropper icons. Use these to set the shadow, highlight, and neutral points of the image. Select the Set Black Point eyedropper on the left, which represents the blacks, and look for the darkest part of the dog image. The problem with lousy originals is that it's often difficult to determine the darkest part.

One handy way to do this is to select the white-point slider (white triangle directly under the histogram) and temporarily drag it to the left. At some point, the image disappears, but just before it does, you'll notice a region that is still visible. This is the darkest part. Make a mental note of the region and drag the white-point slider back to its original position. Now click in that region of the image with the eyedropper. The image darkens, and you'll see black values represented on the left of the histogram.

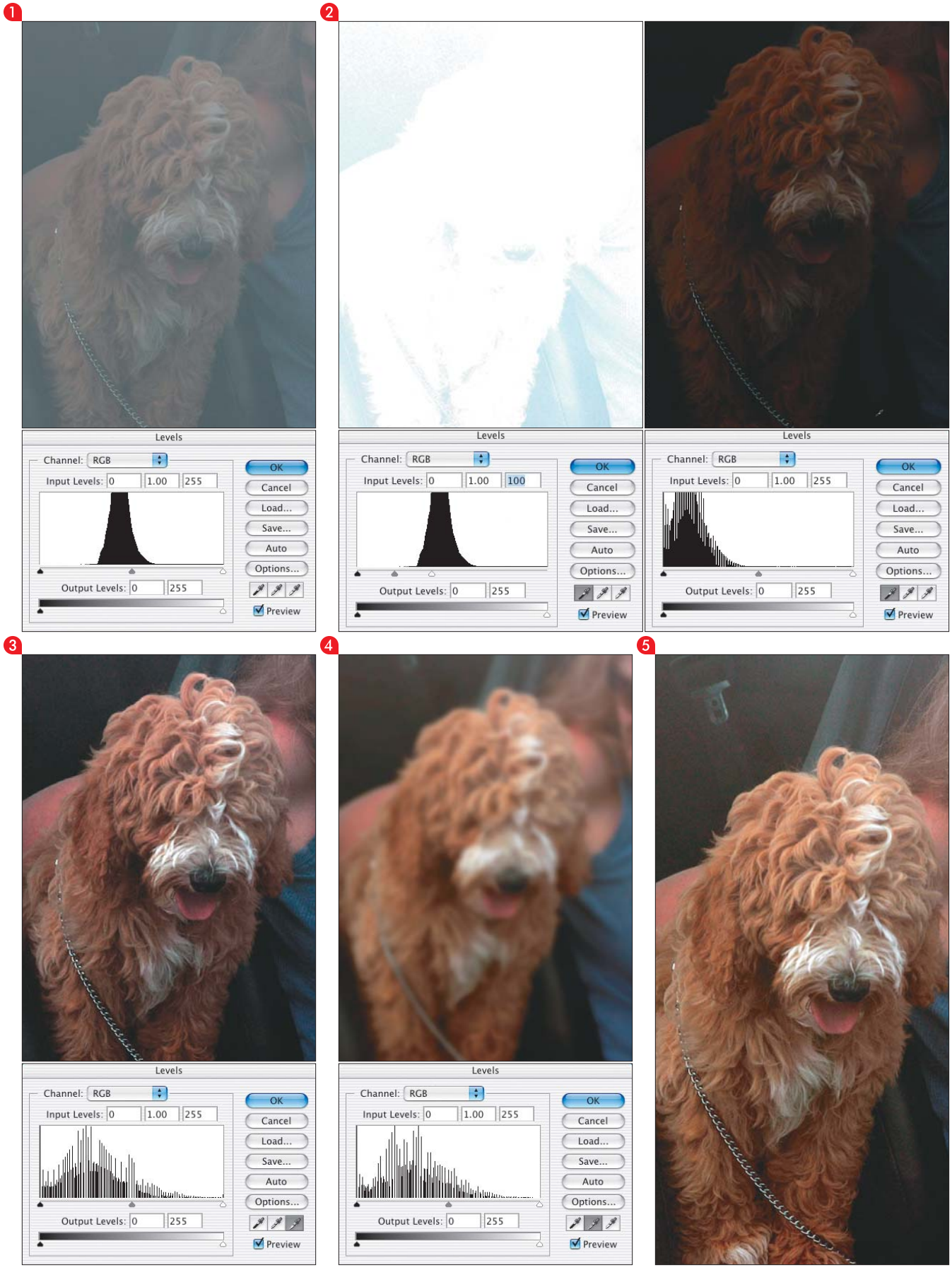
❸ To define the white point, select the Set White Point eyedropper on the right, and click on the lightest part of the image. This is generally easier to find than the darkest part, but some white points are small, so it may be easier to zoom in first. You can't switch tools while the Levels dialog box is open, but you can use keyboard commands: Command/Ctrl-+ zooms in, Command/Ctrl-– zooms out. If you need to clear everything and start again, just press Option/Alt and click the Reset button.

❹ Your objective now is to remove any color cast in the image. Choose the Set Gray Point eyedropper (the middle one), and click on any region you want to designate as a neutral tone. It can be anything from black to white, but selecting close to a midtone gray would be the most accurate. On poor-quality images, the color balance can shift as you click around your "neutral" area because it may be picking up the underlying grain. One handy fix for this is to click OK in the Levels dialog box and duplicate the background layer (Command/Ctrl-J). Apply a Gaussian Blur with a 10-pixel Radius, and double-click the Levels adjustment layer again. Choose the Set Gray Point eyedropper and click on your image's gray point. You have blurred out the grain and forced it to reflect the average color in that region. Just don't forget to trash the blurred layer.

❺ Having improved things technically, you can now evaluate how the image looks onscreen. By sliding the center gray gamma slider (directly under the histogram) to the left or right, you can make midtone areas lighter or darker. The fact that you have used an adjustment layer means that you can assign a mask to this adjustment if you like. Using Levels to reclaim an image can sometimes alter color saturation, so you may also need to add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer and reduce Saturation. These simple adjustment layers can mean the difference between a usable shot or nothing at all.

**Simon Tuckett is an illustrator and retoucher in Toronto. For more information, visit www.simontuckett.com.**

FOR USERS OF PHOTOSHOP 5 AND LATER. COMMANDS AND IMAGES SHOWN IN PHOTOSHOP CS.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2
3
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5
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Output Levels: 0 255
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Cancel
Load...
Save...
Auto
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Cancel
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Save...
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Input Levels: 0 1.00 255
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Auto
Options...
Preview
Levels
Channel: RGB
Input Levels: 0 1.00 255
Output Levels: 0 255
OK
Cancel
Load...
Save...
Auto
Options...
Preview

BY ROGER HUNSICKER

# MAKE SELECTIONS WITH MAGNETIC APPEAL

**Does it seem like the magnetic lasso tool loses its way around the simplest selection? Surprisingly, just setting an anchor point or varying the tool size can get this tool on track again. Once you understand the value of the tool's options and use a few keyboard shortcuts, the magnetic lasso will actually become a real time-saver.**

DOWNLOAD "PARROT.JPG" FROM WWW.PHOTOSHOPFIX.COM, DECEMBER 2004 ISSUE.

Have you ever started making a selection with the magnetic lasso and then tried to click on the Options bar to refine the settings? The lasso doesn't let go, does it? Once you've begun creating a selection with the magnetic lasso, the active path will continue to track your mouse until you complete the selection. But you can work around that limitation by using keyboard shortcuts to zoom, scroll, and change the tool settings during the selection process.

❶ Open "PARROT.JPG," and set the View to Fit on Screen (Command/Ctrl-0). To access the magnetic lasso tool, continue pressing Shift-L until it appears in the toolbox. Prepare the tool in the Options bar by setting Width to 18 pixels (based on the resolution of the parrot image), Edge Contrast to 10%, and Frequency to 57. Make sure Anti-aliased is checked, but uncheck the Pen Pressure box. At this point, leave Feather set to 0, and add a feather if necessary once you've completed your selection. (A good tip to remember before feathering is to clean up your selection by choosing Select > Modify > Contract and entering 1 pixel.)

❷ Set the magnetic lasso's starting point by clicking where the left edge of the parrot's wing meets the arm. The Width setting tells the tool to look for edges within an 18-pixel circle centered on your click. The 10% Edge Contrast determines how sharp an edge the magnetic lasso will detect. If you feel the edge is exceptionally sharp, you can adjust Edge Contrast by pressing the Greater Than key (>) and you'll increase the value instantly. To decrease the value, just press the Less Than key (<).

**MAGNETIC LASSO SHORTCUTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Access magnetic lasso** | Shift-L |
| **Width** | [ ] |
| **Edge Contrast** | > < |
| **Frequency** | ; ' |
| **Zoom** | + - |
| **Hand tool** | Spacebar |
| **Remove last point** | Delete/ Backspace |
| **Make straight section** | Option/Alt-click |

❸ After establishing the starting point, just move the mouse up the edge of the parrot's wing without clicking. The magnetic lasso automatically builds a working path by periodically placing anchor points at a rate based on the Frequency value. To reduce the Frequency value, press the semicolon (;). To increase it, press the apostrophe ('). When the direction of an edge changes abruptly, like at the corner of the parrot's beak and neck, click once to set an anchor point to avoid rounded corners.

❹ If the magnetic lasso loses the edge and misplaces an anchor point, mouse over the previous point and press Delete/ Backspace to remove it. If the working path runs astray before setting an point, back up and move the mouse a little slower over the edge. If this doesn't help, zoom in by pressing the Plus key (+), and press the Left Bracket key ([) until you lower Width to 1. Press the Spacebar and the lasso converts to a hand to move the image. After passing the difficult area, return Width to its original value by pressing the right bracket (]) and zoom out with the Hyphen key (-). Note: This does not work with CS.

❺ To create a straight section of your working path, Option/Alt-click to set the first point, and the tool temporarily changes to the polygonal lasso. Click again to complete the straight section, and the tool automatically returns to the magnetic lasso. You can, however, continue Option/Alt-clicking to create multiple straight edges.

**» You can remove negative space from a closed path by Option/Alt-clicking the tool to set an initial point inside a selection, then proceed as before to define the edge of the area to be removed.**

**» When your working path comes back around to the starting point, the magnetic lasso will show a small circle next to it, and you can click once to complete the selection. If you want to end a selection before your working path comes full circle, double-click the mouse.**

**» If the working path comes across a particularly soft border and doesn't handle it well, reduce Width to 1 pixel as suggested in Step 4, but also reduce Edge Contrast to 1 and increase Frequency to 100. Just remember to push values back to their original settings after passing the ill-defined area.**

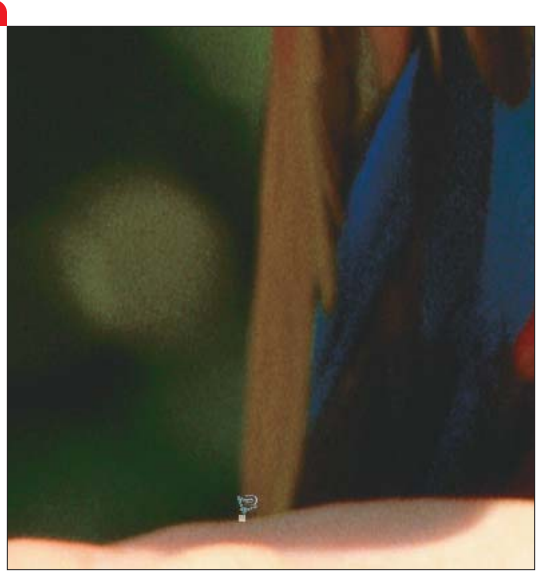
Roger Hunsicker is advertising coordinator for Caterpillar, Inc., in Peoria, Ill., and president of Proof Positive Design Group, a web design firm.

FOR USERS OF PHOTOSHOP 5.5 AND LATER. COMMANDS AND IMAGES SHOWN IN PHOTOSHOP CS.

1

Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Select Filter View Window Help
Feather: 0 px
Anti-aliased
Width: 18 px
Edge Contrast: 10%
Frequency: 57
058P0704LL.JPG @ 35% (RGB/8*)

2



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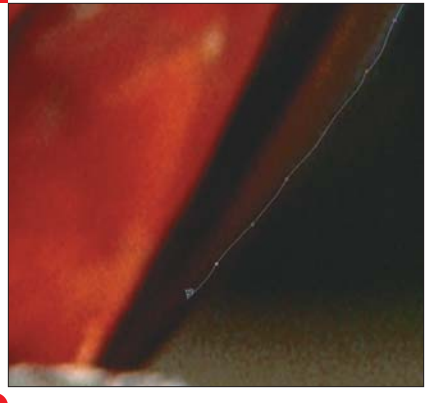


5

BY DOUG NELSON

# BEAT THE BAND!

**When banding occurs in images, it can be mistaken for posterization, but it's more complex than that. Banding is caused by the failure of an algorithm during an image conversion, such as switching to a new color mode. If too many near-identical image tones spread out farther than its computational area, the algorithm can fail, and the conversion may produce tonal edges called bands. To eliminate banding, use the Add Noise filter to add pixel variation to adjacent tones.**

FOR USERS OF PHOTOSHOP 5 AND LATER. COMMANDS AND IMAGES SHOWN IN PHOTOSHOP 7.

1 To understand the cause of banding and how you can fix it, you are going to intentionally force an algorithm failure on an image and create banding. Make a new 1024 x 768-pixel RGB document with a white or light-colored background. With a 300-pixel hard black brush, click once in the center. You've only created one obvious tonal edge, so converting an image like this would be an easy task for any algorithm. Since you want to purposely create an algorithm failure here, you are going to make the image much more difficult for a conversion to compute.

2 Many operations can generate conditions ideal for banding, but blurring is the most common culprit. This is because blurring is literally the spreading of one pixel's tonal value into adjacent pixels. If taken to extremes, the blur will spread out all tones too smoothly, which causes conversions to fail. Since you want to be extreme in this case, choose Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur and set a 75-pixel Radius. Now you have an image that will test the limits of any conversion algorithm!

3 If you have an image ripe for banding, the most common occurrence is when you convert to CMYK for printing either in the printer or the software. Since every printer setup is different, just use Photoshop's CMYK conversion here. Zoom into the top-right quarter of the blurred image and choose Image > Mode > CMYK Color. See how the conversion created banding? You wouldn't want an image like this to print that way, so press Command/Ctrl-Z (Undo) to go back to the unbanded version, and you'll learn now how to fix the problem.

4 While pressing the Option/Alt key, click the Create a new layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette to open the New Layer dialog box. Set Mode to Overlay, and you'll notice the Fill with Overlay-neutral color (50% gray) option appear. In Overlay mode, 50% gray is transparent, so check this option, and click OK. Even though you won't see a visible difference in the image, the new layer has been filled with 50% gray.

5 Now it's time to add some tonal variety that will allow for a conversion without banding. Select the Overlay layer in the Layers palette, choose Filter > Noise > Add Noise, and set a 2% Amount with Uniform distribution and Monochromatic unchecked. You may think you've just ruined a perfectly good gradient, but remember you're zoomed in and it won't be noticeable when you print. Due to the Overlay blending mode, the noise only appears in the image's midtones. Had you applied noise directly to the image, it would've added noise to the highlights and shadows and created a muddy look. Now go ahead and convert to CMYK; choose to flatten the image. This time, the noise provides some tooth for the conversion algorithm to use, so there's no banding.

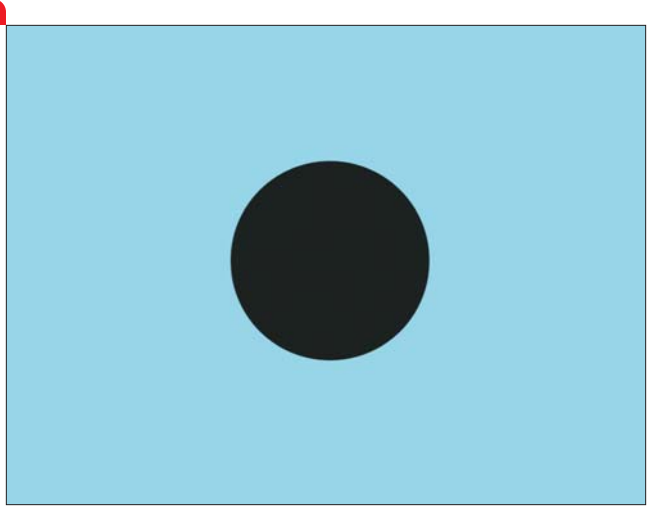
**» This is a destructive procedure, so make sure you're working on a copy of your original.**

**» Each image will require its own custom noise settings, so just add the minimum amount of noise to eliminate your banding.**

**» In certain circumstances, any conversion algorithm can fail, even one that simply interprets how your image appears on your screen. For this reason, always zoom in close (at least 200%) to inspect and ensure the banding is genuine and not just a video artifact.**

**Doug Nelson is a freelance writer, technical editor, and founder of RetouchPRO.com, an online community for photo retouchers. For more information, visit www.retouchpro.com or e-mail dnelson@retouchpro.com.**

1



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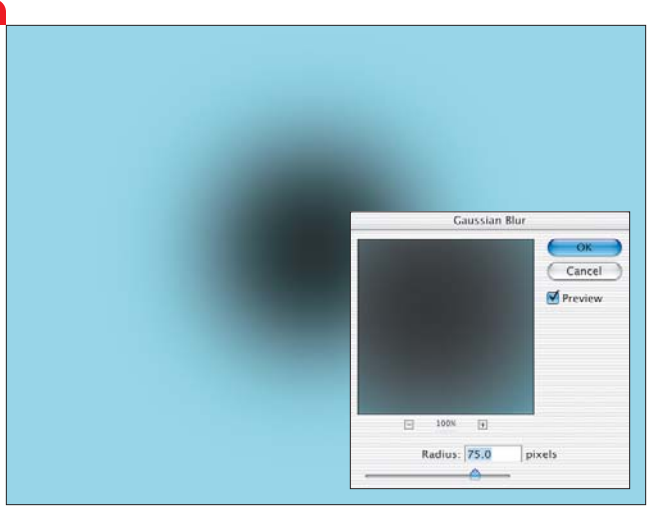
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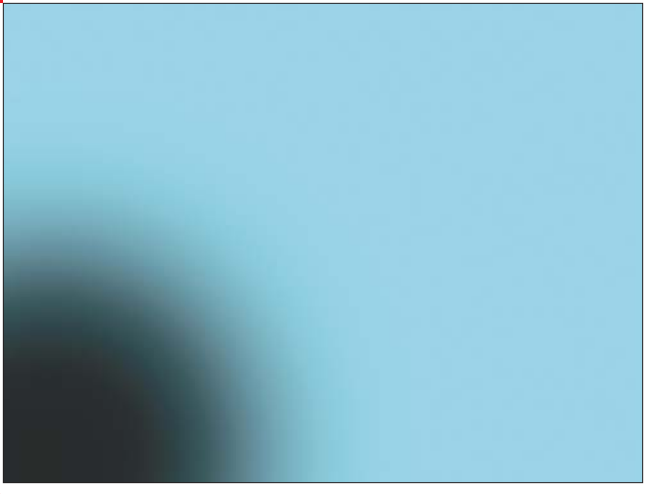

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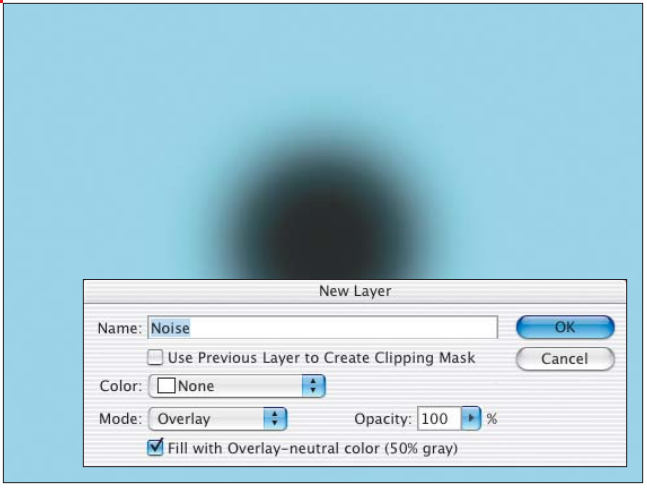
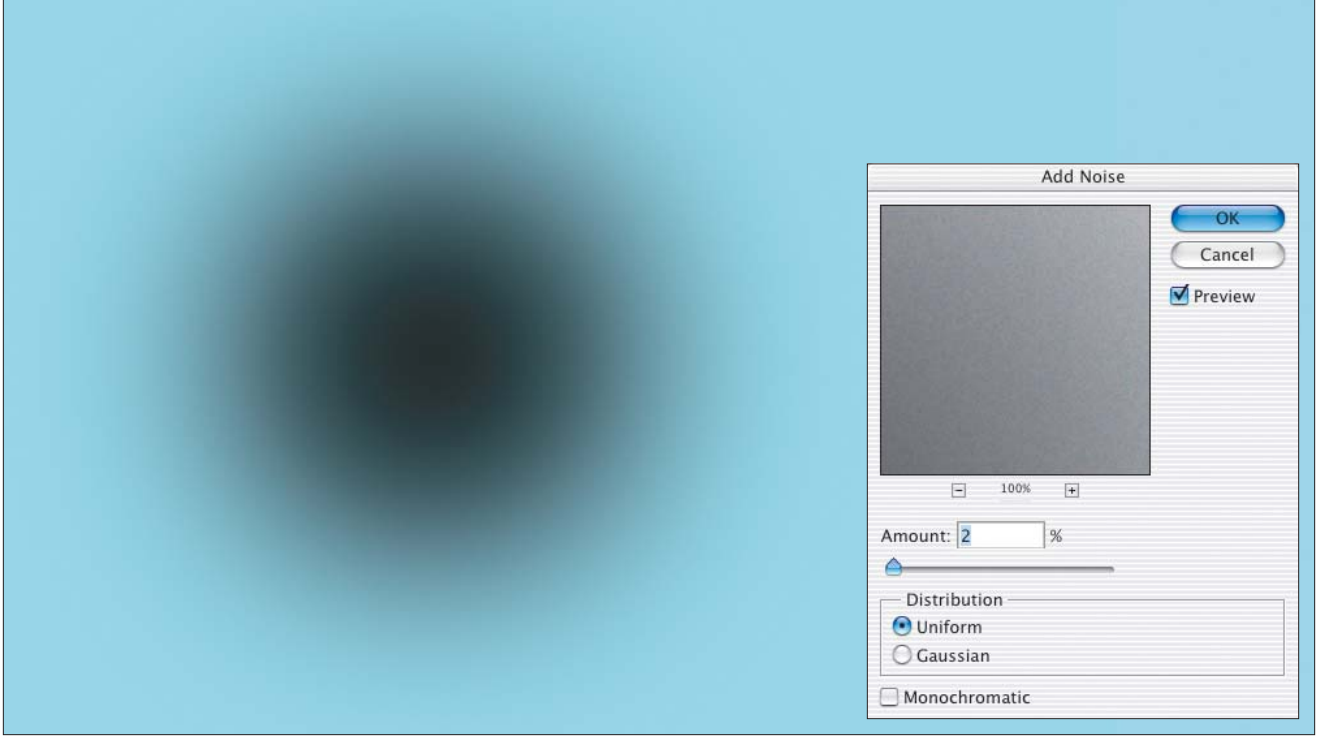

New Layer
Name: Noise
OK
Use Previous Layer to Create Clipping Mask
Cancel
Color: None
Mode: Overlay
Opacity: 100 %
Fill with Overlay-neutral color (50% gray)

5


Add Noise
OK
Cancel
Preview
100%
Amount: 2 %
Distribution
Uniform
Gaussian
Monochromatic

BY DAVID NAGEL

# TAKE THE EDGE OFF

**Because it's a situational task, there's no one right way to mask an image. It can be as easy as clicking the magic wand or as difficult as manually tracing edges with an eraser. For this project, I had two goals: I wanted to separate a difficult element from its background and minimize the manual labor to do it.**

DOWNLOAD "CLOUDGAZER.JPG" FROM WWW.PHOTOSHOPFIX.COM, DECEMBER 2004 ISSUE.

When you consider the problem of masking, it's really a matter of creating distinctions between a subject's edges and its background. Once you do this, the rest is filling in the blanks and performing clean-up operations. One way to accelerate the masking process is to add adjustment layers to gradually break down the obstacle of including intricate details, such as the girl's tresses in my image. Download "CLOUDGAZER.JPG," and go through the process with me.

1 The first step I took to reduce the number of colors in the image was to define the edges of the girl. I clicked the Create new fill or adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette and chose Posterize to decrease the number of colors in the image to 4 Levels. This more accurately defined her hair.

2 For more distinction, I separated the tones of the grass from the tones of the girl by creating a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer. I chose Greens from the Edit menu and moved the Lightness slider all the way to the left at -100. I repeated this with the Yellows and the Cyans as well.

3 I needed to break down the image to pure black and white, so I applied one last adjustment layer: Threshold. I moved the slider to set the Threshold Level to 10, which eliminated all the colors for a high-contrast black-and-white matte.

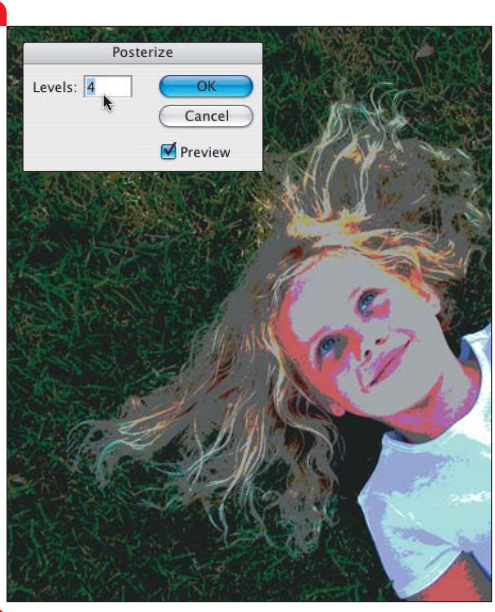
4 Threshold illuminated small areas I didn't want in the selection, so I added a new layer above the original girl layer and cleaned up the image by painting over areas with either black or white. I wasn't concerned with precision because I would fine-tune the mask later.

5 I then opened the Channels palette and selected the Red channel. (It doesn't matter which channel.) I copied it by dragging it over the Create new channel icon at the bottom of the palette. After that, I no longer needed the adjustment layers or the clean-up layer, so I turned off their visibility in the Layers palette.

6 I Command/Ctrl-clicked the new channel, made sure the original girl layer was selected in the Layers palette, and added a mask. The background disappeared! I added a layer, positioned it below the girl, and filled it with black to help me see areas of the image that still needed cleaning up. Because I had created a mask, I could non-destructively fine-tune by clicking the girl layer's mask thumbnail in the Layers palette and painting with white to reveal portions inadvertently masked out. I could also paint with black to eliminate portions that should've been masked out.

**David Nagel is the executive editor of *Creative Mac*, an online publication for professionals in creative production, including design, video, animation, and multimedia authoring. For more information, visit www.creativemac.com.**

1

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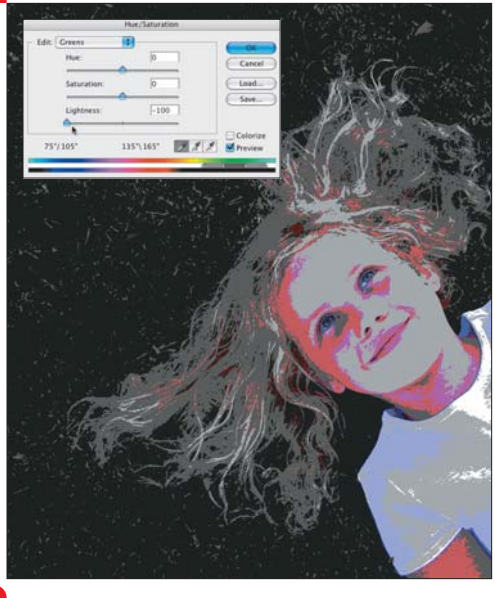


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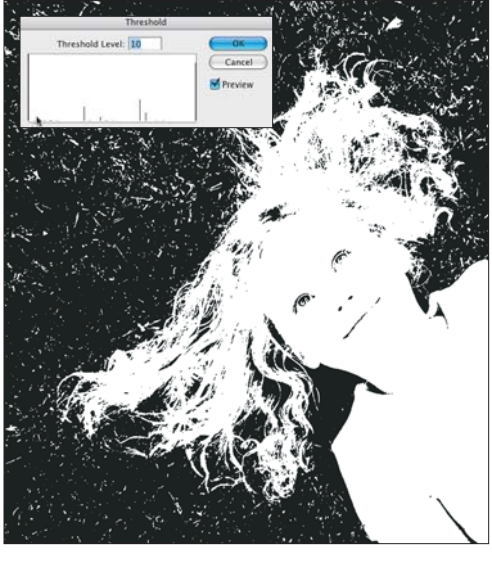
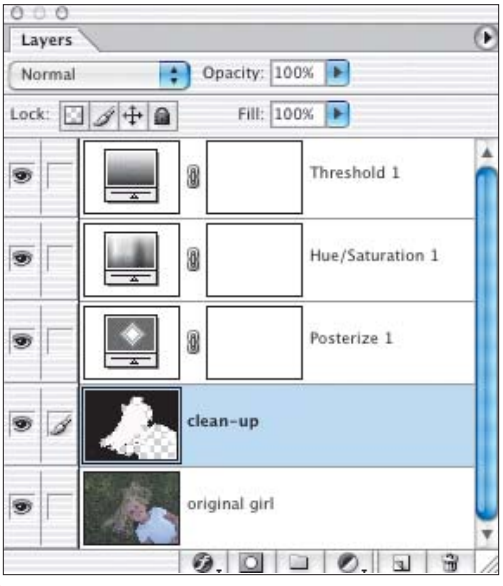



FOR USERS OF PHOTOSHOP 5 AND LATER. COMMANDS AND IMAGES SHOWN IN PHOTOSHOP 7.

4

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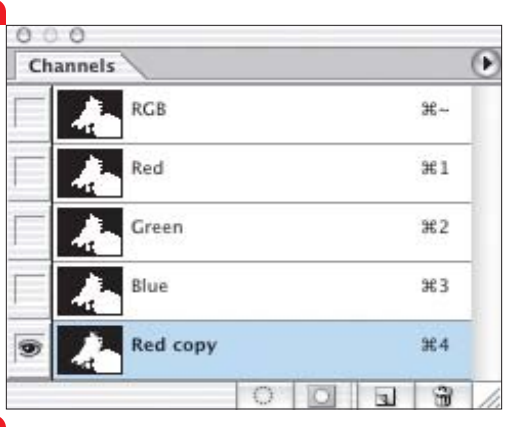



6

BEFORE

AFTER

BY JON CARENZA

# STEP UP AND TAKE ACTION

**Common tasks may be a natural part of your routine, but it doesn't mean they are easy to accomplish. Harness the power of the Actions palette to speed up your workflow and conserve your brainpower.**

## AUTO BLEEDS

Lose the calculator and create an Action to make bleeds for any file:

a. Open a flattened file, and press Command/Ctrl-R if the rulers are not already visible.

b. Open the Actions palette, click the Create new set icon at the bottom, and name it "My Actions" (or select and open a set you've already created). Choose New Action from the Actions palette menu, designate a Function Key in the resulting dialog box, and click Record.

c. Set the Background Color to white in the toolbox by pressing D. (Look to make sure "Reset Swatches" was recorded in the Actions palette.) Choose Image > Canvas Size, check Relative, and set Height and Width to .25 inches. (Set Canvas Extension Color to Background if necessary.) This will allow you some viewing room to set guides.

d. Click on the top ruler, and drag down a guide to 1/8 inches.

e. Click on the left-side ruler, and drag across a guide to 1/8 inches.

f. Choose Image > Rotate Canvas > 180 degrees, and repeat the guide procedure you just did for the top and left. Rotate the image 180 degrees again to return it to the original position. You should have 1/8-inch guides on every side of your image.

g. Click the Stop playing/recording icon at the bottom of the Actions palette. In the future, you can press the function key you assigned and create 1/8-inch bleeds relative to your file size.

## CUSTOM GRAYSCALES

The standard Image > Mode > Grayscale method of converting images tends to leave tones too dark and lacking in contrast. Add this Action to create an easy starting point for a Grayscale image so you can manipulate it to obtain your desired results:

a. Open any photo, then open the Actions palette, click the Create new set icon at the bottom, and name it "My Actions" (or select and open a set you've already created). Choose New Action from the Actions palette menu, designate a Function Key in the dialog box, and click Record.

b. Choose Image > Duplicate, then choose Image > Mode > Lab Color.

c. Open the Channels palette and select the Lightness channel. To extract this channel, choose Image > Mode > Grayscale, press Command/Ctrl-A to Select All, then copy the selection.

d. Close the duplicate image without saving, go back to the original image, choose Image > Mode > Grayscale, and paste the copied selection to put it on a layer.

e. Set the new layer's blending mode to Lighten at 50% Opacity, and click the Stop playing/recording icon at the bottom of the Actions palette. This allows you to enhance the Grayscale image by changing the Opacity or the layer blending mode, or adding a layer mask. There's no perfect solution to creating a perfect Grayscale image, but this method offers options to achieve what you need.

## CAREFUL SAVES

When saving images for service bureaus and printers, you often need a layered PSD file for editing and a separate flattened file for the vendor. When saving a flattened version, there's the possibility you'll accidentally save over your layered file and lose all editing capabilities. Prevent this atrocity by creating this Action:

a. Open an existing PSD file, then open the Actions palette, click the Create new set icon at the bottom, and name it "My Actions" (or select and open a set you've already created). Choose New Action from the Actions palette menu, designate a Function Key in the resulting dialog box, and click Record.

b. Choose File > Save. If the option is grayed out, perform a simple action such as turning a layer on and off, and try again. After saving, choose Layer > Flatten Image (If necessary, click OK to discard hidden layers.)

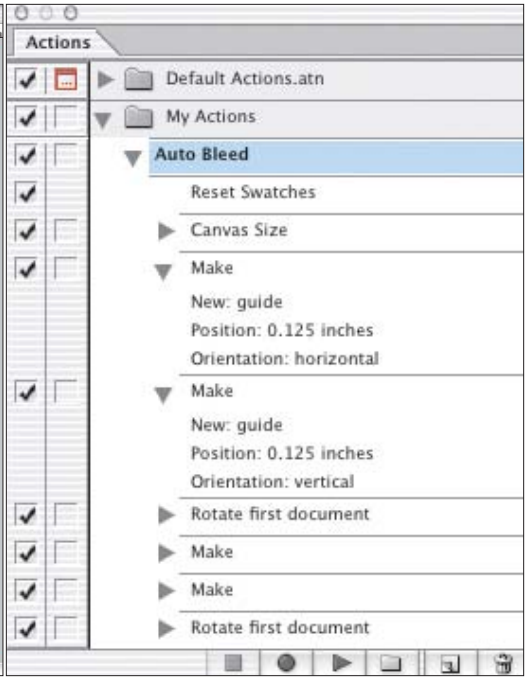
c. Now choose Save As, select your desired file format like TIFF or Photoshop EPS, and save it to the same location where your PSD file is stored.

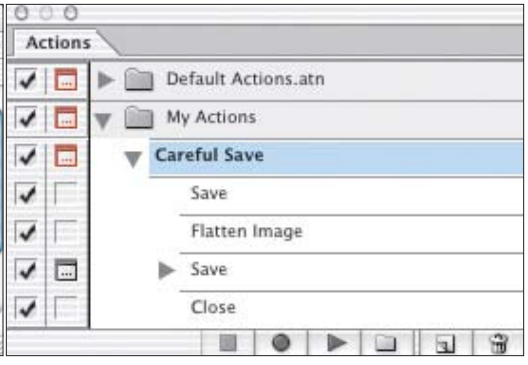
d. Go back to the Actions palette, and click the box directly to the left of the "Save" step you just completed. When you run the Action, this will pause it at the Save As state so you can set a file format and destination.

e. Close the file. Click the Stop playing/recording icon at the bottom of the Actions palette. Now you will be able to simultaneously save the current version of your layered file as well as a flattened version.

**Jon Carenza is a graphic designer in Kansas City. For more information, visit www.jc.zcweb.com.**

**FOR USERS OF PHOTOSHOP 6 AND LATER. COMMANDS AND IMAGES SHOWN IN PHOTOSHOP 7.**






PHOTOSHOP FiX

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- Utilize the value of the Auto Adjustments options.
- Make the File Browser work for you.

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